



# CITY OF CHICOPEE

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS



Stanley W. Kulig, P.E.  
Superintendent

Thomas Hamel  
Chief Operator

Sewer Commission Meeting  
March 22, 2010

Present:        Sewer Commissioners:        Fred Goehring, Chairman  
                                                         Gerald Fecteau  
                                                         Joseph Cariveau

                                                         Carl Roy, Vice-Chairman, Excused  
                                                         Chung Liu, Excused

Also Present: Thomas Hamel, Chief Operator, WPC

Tom Hamel presented the Sewer Commissioners with a correspondence that he sent to Mr. Laflamme, City Treasurer. Tom explained that he recently received a draft 20 year loan repayment schedule for a \$20,195,568.00 loan for sewer separation projects. Tom explained that the sewer rates that the Commissioners have proposed for FY'11 and FY'12 are based on a 30 year loan repayment schedule. In order to change loan to a 30 year repayment, Mr. Laflamme would have to request that the Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust issue a 30 year loan. If the loan remains on a 20 year repayment schedule, the sewer rates will have to be increased higher than what has been proposed.

Sewer and Storm Fee Revenues to date total 5.9 million dollars and Tom Hamel said that is about \$340,000 less than projected.

### Commitments:

March 2010 - Sewer & Storm - \$690,457.63 Mr. Fecteau motioned to accept, seconded by Mr. Cariveau, approved 3-0.

Tom Hamel then presented the Sewer Commissioners with a brochure on Sewer and Storm Water Separation and what property owners need to know about their properties. This brochure will be sent to all property owners within the sewer separation area. In order for the Sewer Separation project to be effective, property owners who have sump pumps, floor drains or roof drains connected to the sewers must disconnect them prior to the start of construction and reconnect them to the new storm water drain. If the property owner completes the work prior to the City installing the new storm drains, the City will provide the property owner with a storm drain connection at their property line.

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## Water Pollution Control

If the property owner completes the work after the City has installed the new pipe, the property owner will be responsible for all costs associated with connecting to the new pipe. Tom explained that it would cost the City of Chicopee approximately \$750,000 to put a storm drain connection at each property involved in the Sewer Separation Project. Property owners may meet with Tighe and Bond, on a one-time-basis, to discuss the project scope and impact it will have on their property. In the past, storm water was allowed to enter the combined sewer/storm water system. However, there is now a federally mandated City Ordinance that prohibits the entrance of storm water into the sanitary system. Therefore, if property owners do not comply with the storm water separation of their sump pumps, floor drains or roof drains, the City may have no choice but to disconnect their sewer service.

The problem is if the City offers to install the storm drain connections at no cost, the property owners will all want it because it is free but they might not even separate their pipes on their property which makes it a waste of money for the City. So, as an incentive for property owners, the City of Chicopee will install a connection to their property line at no charge if they complete their separation work prior to the installation of the City's new pipe. Property owners will have about five years to complete the work. If the property owner requests a storm drain connection before they have separated their service and before the new City pipe is installed, the City will install a connection to their property line for a fee of \$250.00, which will be billed on their sewer and storm water account. The fee of \$250.00 is fully refundable once the separation on their property is completed and confirmed. Now, if the property owner does not have the separation completed on their property and they do not request a storm drain connection prior to the installation of the new main sewer pipe in the street and they do not pay the deposit of \$250.00, then the property owner will be responsible for full costs of future storm drain separation and connection costs associated with connection to the pipe in the street.

Tom Hamel has sent this brochure to both the Law Department and to City Councilor Tillotson for their review, both informed Tom that it was a good idea. However, in order to offer this program to property owners, there has to be an ordinance change. Tom Hamel prepared a correspondence on behalf of the Sewer Commissioners to City Council President, William Zaskey, requesting assistance in adopting an Ordinance change which would allow for a charge for storm water connections for the required separation of sewer and storm water lines for property owners. This would be an amendment to the Code of the City of Chicopee for the Year 1991. The Commissioners also requested that the City Council refer the Ordinance change to the Ordinance Committee for review and adoption. Mr. Carriveau motioned to approve to forward the Ordinance change to the City Council, seconded by Mr. Fecteau, approved 3-0.

Next Tom presented the Commissioners with a correspondence to the Mayor requesting a transfer of funds in the amount of \$30,000.00 from the Collection System Salary Account for Working Foreman to the Wastewater Line Item for Insurance Other. The Wastewater line item for Insurance Other is for workers compensation payments and the amount budgeted is estimated, however the increased costs in FY'10 have exceeded the budgetary allocation, therefore additional funds are needed to complete the fiscal year. Mr. Fecteau motioned to approve to forward the request to the Mayor, seconded by Mr. Carriveau, approved 3-0.

Tom then presented the Commissioners with another correspondence to the Mayor requesting a transfer of funds in the amount of \$200,000.00 from the Sewer Fund Balance to the Wastewater Line Item for Dewatering Improvement Projects. Processed sludge has been transported from the processing unit to the truck by a system of conveyor belts since 1985. In 2004 the conveyor system had outlived its useful life and so the project of replacing them started. Due to the cost of this project, it was divided into two phases. The first phase of replacing two of the three conveyors with a pumping system was completed in 2004. The third conveyor is now completely worn out and needs to be replaced and the first phase was constructed so that glass lined piping can be added to replace this conveyor. The piping will change the conveyor system to a pumping system which will provide long term reliability and enclose the sludge to make a cleaner work place and lessen the chance of sludge falling on employees and/or equipment. The final phase of the Sludge Piping Project is expected to be \$200,000 and Tom Hamel attached a copy of the Engineer's Estimate to complete the work from Tighe and Bond. Mr. Fecteau motioned to approve to forward the request to the Mayor, seconded by Mr. Carriveau, approved 3-0.

#### Abatements:

Jacek & Anna Giec – 232 Poplar Street – Estimated Reading - \$336.59, Mr. Fecteau motioned to approve the abatement, seconded by Mr. Carriveau approved 3-0.

S & L Enterprises LLC – 223 Chicopee Street – Estimated Reading - \$820.65, Mr. Fecteau motioned to approve the abatement, seconded by Mr. Carriveau approved 3-0.

Gisele & Charles Arvin – 60 Forest Street – Estimated Reading - \$64.90, Mr. Fecteau motioned to approve the abatement, seconded by Mr. Carriveau approved 3-0.

Jane Hammersmith – 644 Granby Road – Estimated Reading - \$35.36, Mr. Fecteau motioned to approve the abatement, seconded by Mr. Carriveau approved 3-0.

Tom Hamel updated the Commissioners on the Meter Reading program. Tom explained that the City has hired Badger Meter Inc. to investigate the possibility of installing new remote read meters throughout the City which would make the water meter reading computerized. The Water Meter Reader will be able to drive by the location with a laptop computer installed in the vehicle to read the meter as opposed to physically reading the meter, writing down the reading and then entering it into the computer. Badger Meter Inc.'s first phase would be to install a few of these remote read meters at some of the larger locations throughout the City. The next phase is for Badger Meter Inc. to provide the City with a report on how to install these new meters on every property in the City within one year and also to have one meter reader for the Water Department and Electric Light Department who would read the entire City's meters in one day. The final phase would be to have the readings electronically sent to a computer in the main office. This project will take a few years to complete.

Abatements:

Bertha Malinowski – 27-29 Abbey Street – Billing Error - \$10.00, Mr. Carriveau motioned to approve the abatement, seconded by Mr. Fecteau, approved 3-0.

Diane Olbyrch – 63 Terrimar Street – Interest Charges Paid - \$1.75, Mr. Fecteau motioned to approve the abatement, seconded by Mr. Carriveau, approved 3-0.

Ms. Olbyrch sent in her request stating that she mailed her payment in five days prior to the due date, but the payment was posted after the due date causing her to accrue interest on her account. After looking at her payment history it was noted that she has never made a late payment before.

Maoxiong Zheng – 43-45 Montello Road – High Usage – No Requested Amount, Mr. Fecteau motioned to deny the abatement, seconded by Mr. Carriveau denied 3-0.

Mr. Zheng's abatement was tabled at the January 20, 2010 Sewer Commission Meeting and a letter was sent to him requesting documentation for parts or repairs. As of this meeting, there has been no response from Mr. Zheng.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 28, 2010 at 5:30p.m.

Mr. Fecteau motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:00p.m., seconded by Mr. Carriveau, adjourned 3-0.

Accepted  
3-0  
4/28/10

Copies: ~~Mayor~~  
City Council  
City Clerk  
Stanley Kulig